

SSVF Priority 1 Community Plan

Date Completed/Revised:

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Month			Day			Year			

Continuum of Care (CoC) Name: Worcester City and County		CoC #: MA-506
CoC Representative: James Cruickshank		Title: Continuum of Care Contract Manager
Phone/Email: 774-243-3834 jcruckshank@cmhaonline.org		
Person Completing this Plan: Patrick DiGregorio		Title: Grant Manager
Phone/Email: 508-769-8865/patrickdigregorio@veteransinc.org		

1. Primary Planning and Coordination Group: Identify the primary group responsible for planning and coordinating efforts to prevent and end homelessness among Veterans in the CoC. Identify the principal members of this group and their affiliation.

Primary Group Name:	
Principle Members	Affiliation
Patrick DiGregorio	Veterans Inc Grant Manager
Jim Cruickshank	COC Contract Manager/CMHA
Karen Greenwood	City of Worcester, Veteran Service Officer
Melinda Hillock	VA HUD/VASH Worcester OPC
Shara Katsos	VA Deputy NHC, VISN 1
Patricia Connors	COC Assistant Contract Manager/CMHA
Katherine Calano	City of Worcester
Jayde Campbell	South Middlesex Opportunity Council- Worcester
William Edson	Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center
Christopher White	Veteran Homestead
Denis Leary	Veterans Inc.
Grace Carmarck	COC/ Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance
Miguel Rivera	City of Worcester
Bettina Salfeld	Veterans Inc.
Deb Hill	Veterans Inc.
John Monopoli	Veterans Inc.
Dave O'Doherty	Veterans Inc.
Moses Dixon	Veterans Inc.
Jay Levy	Eliot CHS Homeless Services

2. Ongoing Review and Coordination: Briefly describe how often (e.g., monthly) the above group or a related review/coordination group meets to review Veterans who are homeless, track progress toward re-housing, and coordinate efforts. Include a summary of what information is reviewed during these meetings.

After the kick off conference in Tampa, FL we briefed the COC leadership on what we had learned and our ideas to improve/spread this program. We have worked hard to select, connect with, and invite approximately 25 professionals from different agencies to help with this mission of ending homelessness by 2015.

So far since Tampa we have re-established a Veterans sub-committee of the COC. We had our first meeting on February 12, 2015. We discussed goals of the committee & SSVF, frequency of meetings, the priority one grant details and eligibility requirements, and introduced staff. This meeting served as a great starting point. In debrief, the meeting helped to bring key players to the stable. Slides from Tampa were used. Lessons learned were that organizations were not sure who was a Veteran or what was happening statewide and nationally. Therefore, information was provided, and it was determined that until the CoC develops coordinated assessment, anyone identifying as having served in the U.S. military will be sent to Veterans Inc.

We constantly receive referrals and leads on Veterans and their families in need from our strong network in Central Massachusetts and this meeting will only foster those relationships. We plan to meet monthly as a sub-committee of the COC to define our communities definition of functional zero, identify veterans and their families in need, network and spread the word about SSVF and other resources, and create a written plan to end homelessness among veterans. A small work group is meeting weekly to move things more quickly and to report back to the subcommittee.

Veterans Inc. staff will maintain the meeting minutes for these meetings and document who attends. Veterans Inc. will also provide overall staff support for the plan.

3. SSVF Grantees Serving CoC Geography: Identify each SSVF funded agency serving Veterans in the CoC geography and each SSVF total grant award amount for FY15, including priority 1 ("surge), 2 (renewals), and 3 (other new) awards. If one agency has multiple awards, list each separately. Pro-rate a grant award amount if the award covers more than one CoC geography. Include the projected annual number of households each grantee can serve and the total number of households across all grantees.

Grantee Agency Name	Grant Amount	Total Annual Projected Households	Total Annual Projected Households: Rapid Re-Housing	% of Total Households to be Assisted with Rapid Re-Housing
Veterans Inc. Priority 1	1 million	270	200	74%
Veterans Inc. Priority 2 (Pro-rated)	\$38,000.00	13	13	100%
TOTAL	1,038,000.00	283	213	75%

Please note that data was used for a 1 year period. The P1 grant is 3 years at \$3 million total. However, for the purpose of understanding resources, this chart was set up this way. It is anticipated that more resources from the P1 grant may be used in the first year. The rapid re-housing percentage is higher than 60%.

4. Annual Demand and Need for Rapid Re-Housing Assistance: Using the *Veterans Demand Analysis and Progress Tracking Tool* or other demand analysis data agreed to by the primary group above, identify:

- The most recent actual or projected annual unduplicated number of homeless Veterans (on street and/or who access emergency shelter, Safe Havens, or transitional housing, including GPD) in the CoC geography, by household type
- The number of those Veterans who will need rapid re-housing assistance to exit homelessness
- The number of Veterans needing rapid re-housing assistance who are projected to be eligible for SSVF RRRH assistance.

	Annual Unduplicated	Estimated # of Needing RRRH	Projected # to be Assisted with	Projected # to be Assisted with	Gap (a-(b+c))
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	Homeless Veteran Households	(a)	SSVF RRH (b)	Other RRH (c)	
Households without Children	547	274	210	64*	0
Households with Children	6	3	3	3	0
Total Homeless Veteran Households	553	277	213	67	0

*64 veterans projected to be assisted with other RRH programs will be helped by programs such as ESG, and Massachusetts Chapter 115 benefits through the cities and towns. Chapter 115 & ESG grants will also help those who aren't eligible for SSVF services.

5. CoC Goals for Ending Homelessness Among Veterans: List the CoC's goals for ending Veteran homelessness by the end of 2015 (fill in additional related goals the CoC has determined, if relevant).

What are the CoC's goals for the estimated number of Veterans, including chronically homeless Veterans, who will be homeless as of the night of the January 2016 PIT Count?

	All Homeless Veteran Households (including CH)			Chronically Homeless Veteran Households		
	Sheltered	Unsheltered	TOTAL	Sheltered	Unsheltered	TOTAL
Households without Children	60	0	60	0	0	0
Households with Children	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Households	60	0	60	0	0	0

Note: There were 113 households experiencing homelessness in the 2014 PIT and 13 chronic. The plan is that there were be 0 chronic and that the number experiencing homelessness will be reduced by 53%. It is important to note that many of the sheltered are in GPD. The CoC is aware.*

Has the CoC established other goals related to preventing and ending homelessness among Veterans by the end of 2015? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If "Yes", please describe:

The Worcester COC is focused on goals for the overall homeless population. But part of the focus for the Veterans sub-committee is to develop and improve goals for the veteran population. Some of the goals are to:

- Develop a definition for functional zero in our community
- Establish a written plan to end homelessness among veterans

6. SSVF Integration into CoC Coordinated Assessment System: Briefly describe how Veterans access SSVF assistance (across all SSVF grantees) via the CoC's coordinated assessment system (e.g., "All Veterans who present to the CoC coordinated assessment center are screened for their current situation, needs, and SSVF eligibility. Then....). If not yet fully developed, describe your plans and implementation timeframe. Specifically address:

- a) How Veterans who present for shelter are screened and diverted to SSVF homelessness prevention assistance when they have somewhere safe and appropriate to stay that night.
- b) How Veterans who become literally homeless are screened and triaged to SSVF rapid re-housing assistance as soon as possible once it is clear the Veteran is unable to resolve their homelessness without assistance.

Veterans Inc. SSVF grants are the only SSVF grantees in the Worcester County COC. As an agency we are well established in the community and the continuum of care creating a consistent referral stream. We work closely with Veteran Service Officers in the local cities and towns to help Veterans in need of rapid rehousing and prevention services. Veterans Inc. will serve as the coordinated assessment for Veterans while the CoC develops their plan.

Veterans Inc. has access to GPD housing to provide immediate bridge housing for single male veterans as well as housing for female veterans with children. We have activated a 24 hour call center for veterans in need of services, this will ensure we can step in and handle a crisis situation at any time. We also make good use of the 211 services in the state and the VA hotline for emergency services.

We also have relationships with Veteran Service Officers and the Department of Transitional Assistance to immediately house homeless families in hotels and provide other services. The Veteran Service Officer and other community providers have a clear picture on how to refer to SSVF for assistance.

7. Long-Term System Improvements: Briefly describe how the CoC plans to utilize SSVF Priority 1 and all other SSVF funding over the next three years to foster long-term system improvements and optimization so that homelessness is prevented whenever possible and when it does occur, it is rare and brief. Specifically address areas for improvement related to:

- a) Further integrating SSVF assistance into the CoC's planning, oversight processes and coordinated assessment system.
- b) Ensuring comprehensive coordination with VA systems and other VA funded programs.
- c) Improving or establishing partnerships with community-based services and public/private housing providers.

Our work with the COC leadership to re-establish a Veterans sub-committee within the COC will improve services for Veterans in the community. The VISN Deputy NHC and HUD Region 1 CPD liaison are involved in this process.

Our relationships with the VA staff, resources, and services such as GPD, HUD/VASH, and the CBOC in the area will continue to be very important and grow because of SSVF. We have attended and plan to continue to visit staff meetings at the VA facilities and present to staff about the services of SSVF and our progress.

Our relationships with other community providers are strong but also continue to grow. Our outreach to the Department of Transitional Assistance and The YMCA of Central Massachusetts has resulted in us having SSVF information tables at their sites on a monthly basis. We plan to work to create stronger relationships with all members of the COC and Veteran Service Officers in the community.

We have created a good relationship with local colleges and universities such as Worcester State University and Quinsigamond Community College. We plan to serve their veteran population and plan to expand these relationships to other educational institutions in the continuum.

Working to create a stronger relationship with our legal aid service provider is a top priority for us.

8. Other Strengths and Challenges: Briefly describe any additional strengths and/or challenges relevant to your achieving VA and local goals.

Strengths:

- Established relationships within the CoC, including the re-establishment of the Veteran sub-committee.
- Connections with local Veteran Service Officers, particularly in Worcester, Massachusetts.
- Committed and Reliable Staff – including our new housing specialist.
- Knowledge of SSVF requirements and guidelines.
- Outreaching to community partners, other veteran agencies, housing authorities, and other agencies.

Challenges:

- High levels of Homeless Prevention referrals from community partners.
- Large number of GPD
- Housing homeless families when shelters are full.
- Amount of new veterans that are relocating to Massachusetts. (Managing inflow and exit)
- Locating landlords that buy into the program and are willing to help veterans. (Note: P1 grant has a Housing Specialist that